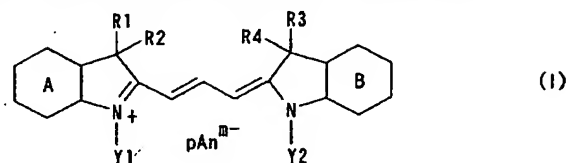


## CLAIMS

1. A cyanine compound represented by general formula (I):



- wherein ring A and ring B each represent a benzene or naphthalene ring that may be substituted; at least one of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups, and the other paired groups each represent an alkyl group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to each other to form a 3- to 6-membered ring; Y1 and Y2 each represent an organic group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms;  $An^{m-}$  represents an m-valent anion; m represents an integer 1 or 2; and p represents a coefficient for maintaining the charge neutrality.

2. The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein each of R1, R2, R3, and R4 is a benzyl group.
3. The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein ring A and/or ring B constituting the heterocyclic ring with the adjacent two benzyl groups is a naphthalene ring.
4. An optical recording material containing the cyanine compound of claim 1, the optical recording material being adapted to be used in an optical recording layer formed on a substrate to make an optical recording medium.
5. An optical recording medium comprising a substrate and a thin film of the optical recording material of claim 1 on the substrate.